

STATINTL



Mr. Robert Calkins, President
The Brookings Institution
1775 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20036

Dear Mr. Calkins:

In early 1965, I was notified that The Brookings Institution had approved my request for a Federal Executive Fellowship. I was elated since this fellowship gave opportunity to bring to fruition an idea I had cherished and nourished for many years--to prepare a book on sources of information for the Federal personnel security investigator.

Early in the fellowship, I realized that there was an unexpected bonus in that I was away from briefings, conferences, deadlines and the inexorable jangling of the phone. In addition to accomplishing something that I felt was important, I was also making an intellectual retreat. I thoroughly enjoyed both aspects of the fellowship.

I am happy to say that I was able to complete my project in the fellowship year and I am deeply grateful to Brookings for giving me this opportunity. It was nice being a FEF and I feel that Brookings is doing a great service to the United States Government in presenting the FEF program.

Sincerely,

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An integral part of the preparation of a research paper of this nature is the analysis and evaluation of just what information is usable. Although the overall appraisal of the suitability of an individual for government employment is made by the Headquarters appraiser, there is much that can and must be done by the field investigator. In receiving information from an individual regarding an action taken or a view expressed by the subject of the inquiry, it is essential that the information be reported as well as the circumstances under which an action was taken. For example, in reviewing a college record there might be a notation that the subject was suspended from school for a three day period when he was a sophomore. In black and white this might indicate a serious breach of school discipline when actually it might have been a wholesale suspension for a prank that embarrassed the school or for some relatively innocuous reason such as bringing an automobile on campus against school regulations. The same is true in the reporting of accident and police records. The statements of biased witnesses must be analyzed in a truly objective manner. A hasty word to a police officer made just after an accident looks far worse on paper than what was intended.

The neighborhood inquiry produces the bulk of the most prejudiced information both from the over friendly neighbor who oversells the Subject or the unfriendly type who is not averse to maligning the individual being investigated. The former is easier to detect than the latter but both types of information have to be analyzed and evaluated in order that a factual picture is obtained and reported.

The self serving declaration of an individual, e.g. a Personnel History Statement should be analyzed to determine if there are any untrue statements or if there is any "puffing". Experience has demonstrated however that such "puffing" is much easier to detect than the prejudiced information given by an "objective" third party.

In the proposed handbook, every effort will be made to insure that the field reporter uses all sources, points out the usability or value of given information, and reports the information objectively. In short, it is desired that the field reporter will use the surgeon's scalpel instead of the butcher's cleaver in the obtaining, evaluating and reporting of information.